

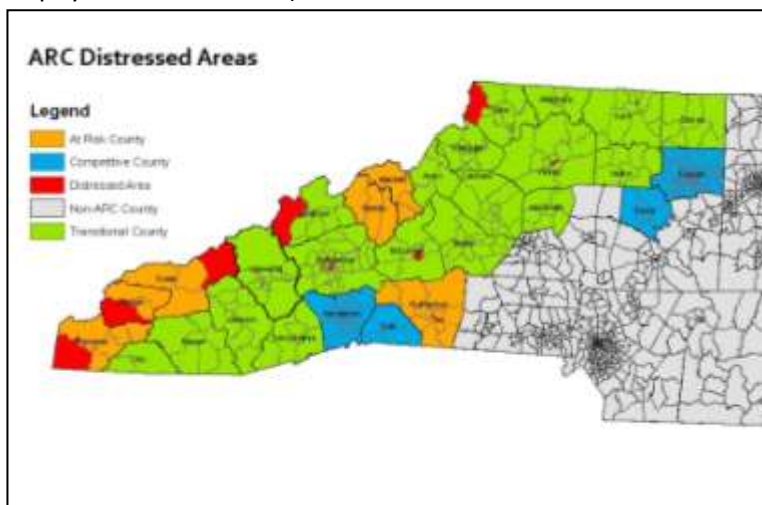
In addition, if the Congress authorizes special consideration for at-risk counties, the state may entertain requests for assistance up to seventy percent of the total project cost.

Distressed Areas

In 2010, portions of ten counties will have recognized "distressed areas." These areas are located in Ashe, Buncombe, Cherokee, Graham, Madison, McDowell, Rutherford, Surry, Swain, and Wilkes counties. (Of note, Cherokee, Graham, Rutherford, and Swain are also designated as at-risk counties.) ARC distressed areas are census tracts in transitional counties (counties that are neither distressed nor economically competitive) that qualify on both a selected measure of income (median family income – sixty-seven percent or less than the US average) and poverty (poverty rate – 150 percent or more of the US average). There are 643 qualifying census tracts in the thirteen states, seventeen of them are in NC.

The qualifying tracts in North Carolina are:

- Ashe – tract 9703 (W of Lansing & State Road 88)
- Buncombe – 8 tracts in Asheville (S of I-240, W of College Street and E of Burton Street; N of I-240, W of Flint Street and S of Leicester Highway; and N & E of Riverside Drive and W of US 19)
- Cherokee – tract 9906 (SW of Murphy & Hiwassee Lake)
- Graham – tract 9903 (South of Lake Santeetlah in the Snowbird Community)
- Madison – tract 102 (roughly along State Road 209, SW of Hot Springs, W of Marshall)
- McDowell – tract 9705 Marion (N of I-40, S of E. Court Street)
- of Hot Springs, W of Marshall)
- Rutherford – tract 9608 Forest City (N of 74, 74A Bypass, S. of 74 Business/Main Street)
- Surry – tract 9904 – Mount Airy (NW of Ararat River, S of W. Pine, E of 52)
- Swain – tract 9601 – (N of Jackson County, W of Haywood County, S. of TN line, E of Bryson City)
- Wilkes – tract 9606 – North Wilkesboro (between Main Street & Elkin Highway)



The state's project selection process will take this factor into consideration to ensure that ARC can continue to meet the Congressional directive to target half of the project funds to aid distressed counties and areas. Although they do not qualify under Commission policy for recognition, competitive counties contain areas that would have merited designation were they in transitional counties.